

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 DAMASC 01543 171415Z

41

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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P 171306Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6781

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 1543

STADIS

EXDIS

S/S-O FOR NEA/ARN ONLY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID SY

SUBJ: PL 480 TITLE I AGREEMENT WITH SYRIA

REF: (A) STATE 58514, (B) STATE 49736, (C) STATE 29822

1. I AM INCREASINGLY CONCERNED REGARDING OUR PROPOSED PL 480 PROGRAM FOR SYRIA, PARTICULARLY WITH RECENT SIGNATURES OF AGREEMENTS WITH JORDAN AND EGYPT. REFTELS, BEGINNING WITH REF C OF FEB 6, HAVE ALL MENTIONED NEED FOR PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION TO MAKE SYRIA ELIGIBLE DESPITE CUBA TRADE. IS THIS ONLY FACTOR HOLDING UP OUR PROCEEDING WITH NEGOTIATIONS AS OUTLINED IN REF A? WITH PASSAGE NOW OF FIVE WEEKS FOR SUCH DETERMINATION, CAN YOU GIVE ME ANY FIRM ESTIMATE ON WHEN DETERMINATION WILL BE MADE?

2. BY FURTHER DELAY, WE ARE SHORTENING FY TIME LIMIT FOR SHIPMENT OF COMMODITIES PRIOR TO JUNE 30, THEREFORE PUTTING UNDUE PRESSURE ON SYRIAN NEGOTIATORS AND TENDER/CONTRACT/ SHIPPING PROCESS AND INCREASING RISK OF HAVING TO EXTEND AGREEMENT BEYOND END OF FY, THUS THROWING UMR INTO NEXT FY.

3. AS NOTED PARA 2, REF B, WE CAN ADD VEGOIL EITHER BEFORE
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AGREEMENT SIGNATURE OR BY AMENDMENT. I HOPE THEREFORE THAT

NEGOTIATING AUTHORITY PROMISED IN REF A FOR RICE NOT BEING
HELD UP BECAUSE OF FURTHER INTERAGENCY CONSIDERATION OF
VEGOIL.

WE NOTE RICE PROGRAM IS FOR \$9.7 MILLION GIVEN PRICE
DECREASE SINCE OUR PREVIOUS ESTIMATE (DAMASCUS 400). WE
HAD ESTIMATED 15,000 MT VEGOIL AT \$7 MILLION, FOR A CURRENT
ESTIMATED TOTAL OF \$16.7 MILLION, WELL BELOW FY 75 PROGRAM
OF \$22.5 MILLION. WHEN CAN WE EXPECT VEGOIL APPROVAL?
WHAT IS ESTIMATED VEGOIL PROGRAM VALUE AND WILL IT BRING
US BACK UP TO ENTIRE \$19.6 MILLION PACKAGE WE PROPOSED IN
DAMASCUS 400 OF JANUARY 23? ALSO, PLEASE CONFIRM PRESIDENTIAL
DETERMINATION WILL APPLY EQUALLY TO RICE AND VEGOIL AS WE
WOULD NOT WANT TO FACE FURTHER FIVE-WEEK DELAY FOR SEPARATE
DETERMINATION OF VEGOIL.

MURPHY

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Message Attributes

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